

Congratulations, you are nearing the halfway mark of your pregnancy!



You are now in the **second trimester** of your pregnancy. For most women, these middle three months are uneventful and passes very quickly.

What happens to your body?

- Your pregnancy is becoming noticeable during this period. First-time mothers show a little later due to strong abdominal muscles.
- Any nausea you may have experienced during your first trimester should hopefully have subsided by about 15 weeks.
- You will still be making frequent trips to the loo due to the increasing size of the uterus taking up the space of the bladder.
- Between 16 and 20 weeks, you may start feeling your baby move. At first, it will feel like butterflies, but as the baby grows, you will feel stronger movements like a kick or even a fist punch. If this is not your first baby, you may feel movement as early as 16 weeks.
- A dark vertical line called *linea nigra* may appear on your belly. Some women may get pink or shiny stretch marks on their growing belly, while others may have the problem of itching. Take care of your skin. Use a good moisturiser that contains olive oil. This will help prevent stretch marks and also soothe any itching.
- You may crave for certain foods, sometimes unusual food or foods that you didn't enjoying eating before; or you may pull up your nose at food you enjoyed before (food aversions).
- Constipation and heartburn is very common during this period.
- Due to water retention, your ankles and feet may become swollen. Put up your feet in the evenings.
- Headaches and light-headedness are common during this time. Listen to your body and try to rest as much as possible.
- Your gums become softer and may be prone to bleeding when you brush your teeth.



What happens to your baby?

- Your baby is very active, is able to roll over and may even suck its fingers.
- This is a good time to sing and encourage dad to talk to your baby – your baby can hear you!
- Remember that everything you eat, the baby eats – your baby can swallow, absorb and discharge fluids.
- Your baby's adorable little hands are now formed and the fingernails are detectable.
- Your baby can respond to light, touch and sound.



When to contact your doctor or midwife?

- Sudden and excessive swelling of your face, hands and feet
- Persistent headache or blurred vision
- Severe pain in the lower belly
- Running a fever
- Vaginal bleeding.



Your second trimester to-do list

- Continue with your **minerals and multivitamins** as prescribed by your doctor.
- Continue eating a **well-balanced diet**. Remember, even though you are 'eating for two', you do not have to eat twice as much.
- There are certain types of **exercise** that you can do to tone your body and to help you during labour. Never engage in any vigorous exercise without consulting your doctor or midwife.
- Think about where and how you would like to **give birth** – hospital or home birth, vaginal or caesarean delivery?
- **Boy or girl?** Your doctor or midwife may be able to determine the sex of your baby with an ultrasound.
- Your doctor or midwife may offer you additional blood tests and a more detailed ultrasound to **check the baby's development** and whether there are any causes for concerns.



Parent Sense – taking the guesswork out of parenting



- Free PREMIUM access to the Parent Sense baby and parenting app for reliable tracking of nutrition, sleep patterns and baby's milestones, and expert advice and support when you need it.
- FREE antenatal classes, lactation (breastfeeding), pregnancy and parenting courses via Parent Sense.
- You will have access to a 24/7 support chatbot, trained to assist you with all your pregnancy and parenting questions.
- For **Plus Option** members only: Two lactation (breastfeeding) consultations via Parent Sense, paid from your Medical Spending Account (MSA).

Pick n Pay Medical Scheme wishes you well on your pregnancy journey!

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